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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the history and status of the Urban/Rural School Development Program which has both community involvement and inservice teacher education as components. The paper first discusses certain important features of the Urban/Rural program. One unique feature of this program is its built-in parity mechanism that requires shared decision-making between school professionals and the community, and which sets it apart from similar programs in teacher education. Another salient feature of the Urban/Rural program is that it is aimed at inservice education. The importance of Leadership Training Institutes (LTI) in relation to this program is also stressed, since the LTI, through workshops, conferences, and newsletters, has served as a unifying element for the Urban/Rural sites. The paper then discusses the attempts of Urban/Rural programs, by including teachers in their planning, to solve certain problems found in traditional inservice education programs. A working definition of inservice education is then proposed, and strategies and mechanisms for providing inservice education that have emerged in the Urban/Rural program are discussed. Other Urban/Rural experiences for the design of a national strategy for inservice education are considered, and the success of various projects is also discussed. The paper concludes with a list of 11 conclusions or important experiences to offer national and local educational policy makers. (BD)

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Community Involvement and In-Service Teacher Education: The Urban/Rural Approach

ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE ON TEACHER EDUCATION

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COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND INSERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION: THE URBAN/RURAL APPROACH

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Foreword

Community involvement and inservice teacher education are two of the most discussed concepts in education today. The current teacher surplus has led to an emphasis on re-training practicing or in-service teachers in keeping with current educational needs. In turn, various events, including dissatisfaction with educational practice and a heightened sense of social concern, have led to the espousal of community involvement in education.

The function of SCIPs (Special Current Issues Publications) is to assist in the clarification of important issues in education. This SCIP, the fourth in the series, describes the history and status of the Urban/Rural School Development Program which has both community involvement and inservice teacher education as components, and which, consequently, addresses many of the concerns that prompted interest in these concepts.

The ERIC Clearinghouse on Teacher Education is grateful to Pete Mesa for his work in describing the Urban/Rural School Development Program. He has drawn upon his experience as executive director of the Leadership Training Institute for the Urban/Rural program at Stanford University in presenting not only the workings of the program but also its historical background, rationale, and goals, and the program's success in light of its goals, rationale, and background.

As of this writing, forthcoming titles related both to the Urban/Rural program and current issues in inservice education include Parity in Urban/Rural Programs: The State of the Process (Bruce Joyce, ed., Urban/Rural School Development Program, Stanford Center for Research and Development in Teaching) and a series of monographs under the overall title, The Profession Speaks on In-Service Teacher Education (Bruce Joyce, ed., McCutchan, Berkeley, California).

Joost Yff
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It is obvious that inservice education will receive increasing attention from federal and state education offices and from institutions of higher education. The reasons are clear. The teacher shortage is over and so is the concern of these institutions for it. Criticisms of schools continue as do the pressures for educational change and improvement. Teachers are central to the process of education and, since change and improvement can no longer be hoped for through the infusion of large numbers of new and better prepared teachers into the schools, the target for change will now be the teacher already in service.

The Urban/Rural program, now into its fifth year of operation, is a national experiment in inservice education. Though its goals are considerably broader, it offers the only national experience for developing strategies for inservice education.

The purpose of this paper is to offer the experiences of the Urban/Rural School Development program for a broad and deep study of the potential of inservice education for improving the nation's schools. The paper will attempt to describe the social forces and events that shaped Urban/Rural, its unique features and experiences, and their value for planning future inservice education programs.

The reader is cautioned to take this treatment of the Urban/Rural program very tentatively. The views presented here are based almost entirely on the author's observations and experiences as executive director of the Leadership Training Institute, the national technical assistance arm of the project. Though the position has given the author a very favorable vantage point from which to view the activities of the sites, at this time, before the formal program evaluation is completed, these admittedly subjective observations of the program experience are offered to those concerned with inservice education with the knowledge that this report may be somewhat premature. There is a need, however, to proceed with the task of improving inservice education and we hope the Urban/Rural experience will be useful for that purpose.

URBAN/RURAL SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Urban/Rural School Development Program was conceived in 1968 just as the full impact of the Civil Rights upheaval was being felt by the American educational establishment. The political and racial turmoil that resulted brought about a radical shift in the attitudes of the public toward government and its institutions, especially the schools. Educators had traditionally formulated educational plans, interpreted them to the public, and then tried to promote support for them. Now feelings ran high that the community should and must participate actively in the creation of educational policy. Parent groups organized everywhere and demanded participation and improvement in areas that educators had long held as their domains. The federal funding establishment had the message delivered to it clearly and emphatically. At a meeting held in Tucson, Arizona by the National Advisory Council in May 1968 to review prospective proposals for the Training of Teacher Trainers Programs, all 65 of the proposals considered were rejected because their community involvement components did not respond strongly enough to the demands of the times.

Though it was born in this climate, two events influenced the form of Urban/Rural. One was a visit by the Urban/Rural Planning Task force to a school in the Ocean Hill Brownsville District in Brooklyn that had just gone

through the community control struggle with the New York Teachers Union. The other was the assassination of Martin Luther King which gave tremendous thrust to the Black community's appeals for control of their schools and communities. "Community control" during later program negotiations was modified to "parity in decision-making between school and community;" nevertheless, the events of the times dictated that community control be designed into Urban/Rural even in some compromised form.

The Civil Rights movement was not the only social change that stamped the character of the Urban/Rural program. A predicted, but quickly developing, "teacher oversupply" also caught the educational establishment by surprise since they were high-geared in the opposite direction and pre-occupied almost entirely with filling the teacher shortage and improving the preparation of new teachers. Indeed, the Bureau of Educational Personnel Development (BEPD) was formed in 1968 "to remedy personnel shortages in education, to consolidate education manpower training programs scattered throughout the Office of Education, and to reform training for education professionals." By 1970, the "teacher oversupply" problem had arrived in full force.

To sum up then, community demands for more control of the schools and a teacher oversupply were two major social changes that had great impact on the planners of the Urban/Rural program. The question is, what unique programmatic features did the program respond with to the demands of these social changes?

PARITY IN DECISION-MAKING BETWEEN SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY IN THE GOVERNANCE OF THE URBAN/RURAL PROGRAM

The single most unique and powerful difference in Urban/Rural from its sister programs in teacher education is the built-in parity mechanism that requires shared decision-making between school professionals and community. Parity as a concept had been around for some time but has never been officially defined so as to make it operational.

Don Davies, Associate Commissioner of Education, stated at one time that the "parity principle was an important factor in all BEPD programs, but not parity in decision-making." "We leave the interpretation of that policy to each individual program within the Bureau," he said. Bill Smith, then director of the Division of School Programs, which housed Urban/Rural, authored the first working definition. He defined parity as "mutual, collaborative decision-making on the part of those rendering and those receiving services." The instrument by which this mutual, collaborative decision-making was to be done in Urban/Rural was a School-Community Council (SCC).

The Program Information Document that has served as the program's guidelines describes the function of the SCCs:

> The School-Community Council shall be comprised of elected representatives from the ranks of teachers, administrators, other school staff, and the community (which will include students). The concept of parity should be reflected in the composition of the Council, with at least half the membership comprising other than the school staff. A School-Community Council should be considered as an integral part of a school district. With the acceptance of an Urban/Rural School Development Program Grant, every system has accepted this option as a condition for participation in the program. The school district in accepting the Urban/Rural School Development Program has accepted an obligation to delegate such decision-making authority to the

School-Community Council. Authority delegated to the School-Community Council does not supplant that of the school board nor the authority of state and local governments. The Councils must operate within the requirements of Federal, State and local laws. However, it is expected that local education agencies will provide to the School-Community Councils the broadest possible discretion for making decisions relating to the design and implementation of education personnel training programs for the designated schools within a project.

The Urban/Rural program is unique among the USOE programs in advocating parity for communities in decision-making.

What has the experience with parity been? The concept has demonstrated unexpected power to survive. All the School-Community Councils have outlasted superintendents, Board members, and others that were openly hostile and wanted to be rid of the program. All sites accepted the program with some uneasiness. But in none of the sites have the fears and suspicions of those who opposed community involvement materialized to the degree feared. This is not to say it has been easy at all of the sites. But even the most originally skeptical and anxious opponents of Urban/Rural today admit that their fears were not realized and that the program has resulted in some benefit for the schools.

The idea of parity has posed a threat to school boards and administrators of many of the Urban/Rural sites. Their main concern was how a staff could serve what amounted to two boards of education and two administrations. Also school personnel feared the intrusion and interference of uninformed community people in professional educational matters. The present Councils enjoy various states of autonomy with differing degrees of parity both internally and between themselves and their local boards. About half of the Councils function somewhere between partial and total cooptation; the other half have sustained a level of parity much beyond the expectations of many of those who have been involved with the program since or near its beginning.

The role that a successful School-Community Council can perform for the benefit of a school was probably best expressed by a superintendent of one of the sites with evidence of high parity: "A school board concerns itself with policy and fiscal matters and does not have time to examine educational needs. On the other hand, the School-Community Council can devote itself to examining and responding to the educational needs of the children."

What difference has high parity or low parity decision-making made to inservice education? Or, to ask the question more specifically, is there a link between higher parity and program impact on teachers and students? Sites rated among the top three on parity have generated the most diverse and highest number of staff development activities. One, a rural site, has collaborated with the Leadership Training Institute (LTI) in the production of a film documenting the impact of Urban/Rural on its schools. Another, a mid-sized urban site, has taken the bold step of incorporating itself and has won a grant of $330,000 to continue its activities after the Urban/Rural funding ends. The third site held a festival recently to which its community, other sites, and out-of-town guests were invited to observe the impact of Urban/Rural on the classrooms and to visit an exhibit of the various materials and projects produced as a result of the training. Staff and community cohesion on the SSC's and in their constituencies is so strong that they have produced changes in modes of instruction, improved school climates, reduced dropout rates, and improved student performance despite surges of opposition from their boards and some segments of their communities.

Urban/Rural training can have some effect without parity. At two of the sites ranked in lowest quartile of parity, substantial reading gains have been achieved as a result of the Urban/Rural training. And yet, at one of these sites, despite the gain in reading achievement, alienation between school and the community-at-large continues to be serious. Some community and staff are unhappy with the narrow focus of the program and feel that their concerns about the children's affective development are not reflected in the program objectives. Teacher participation in the training activities at the site has become increasingly difficult to maintain and conflicts between staff on the SCC and in the school appear to be intensifying.

As can be seen in the above example, a difference cited between high and low parity sites is that a low parity site tends to focus on narrow objectives. Low parity sites dominated by the community tend to place more blame on teachers. Consequently, these inservice education activities are characterized by efforts to "sensitize" or "humanize" the teacher. On the other hand, low parity sites dominated by the staff focus mainly on student or family "deficiencies" (e.g. lack of parental encouragement).

Given these differences between low and high parity sities, what are the arguments for school-community collaborative decision-making related to in-service education? Despite the impact of Urban/Rural training on some of the low parity sites, the alientation and distrust people in these poverty communities feel towards their schools is pervasive and deep. Most school personnel, on the other hand, feel that it is unfair to ask them to make up for the deficits of poverty from which, they believe, the children suffer. It appears that parents and teachers project the guilt, anger, and frustration they feel upon each other. Hence the difference in character of staff-dominated inservice program decisions as opposed to community-dominated ones. The diversity of activities observed in high parity sites reflects the dialogue, exchange, and mutual education that takes place between staff and community when both are responsible and accountable for the program decisions they make. The process is not always easy or peaceful. Nevertheless, it appears that the School-Community Council allows essentially hostile groups to work out their suspicions of each other and reach mutually agreeable goals and actions. In short, parity becomes a process by which parents can feel some of their children's education and where teachers can communicate their problems and needs.

There are other reasons why both community and school people should determine inservice education programs collaboratively. It is one thing to know intellectually that there is great variation in the environments in which schools are set. The impact on the observer who actually experiences these differences, however, is virtually overpowering. One Indian site is 60 miles from the nearest town and suffers a 90% yearly turnover in its teaching staff. The children who attend these schools have as minimal contact with the majority culture as is possible in the continental United States. Another site is located in the midst of the most devastated slum of the largest city in the country. A third is located in a former mining center for which this industry has not provided economic support to the community for 30 years. The conditions of isolation, insulation, economic deterioration, and many other factors create or maintain subcultures and life styles almost totally foreign to the average teacher. Even those from the community who teach in the schools tend to have the effects of these conditions erased as they undergo the typical teacher preparation.

If we have learned anything from the opportunity to work with and experience this great diversity of school populations and settings it is that there is so

much in each community that has uniquely shaped the values, relationships, motivations, and aspirations of the children that there is no possible way for the present patterns of preservice education to prepare school staffs to be responsive to the children's needs and priorities. It is this knowledge of the uniqueness of their children that the community members of the School-Community Council bring to the interaction between themselves and the professionals.

FOCUS ON INSERVICE EDUCATION OF STAFF

Another salient if not so unique feature of the Urban/Rural program is that it is aimed at inservice education. Great flexibility is allowed sites to determine the inservice education needs not only of teachers, but also of students, community persons, administrators, and anyone in the school involved with the education of the children. Other federal educational programs such as ESEA Title I permit or encourage inservice training for staff. But Urban/Rural was the first BEPD program in which it was the main focus. And, of course, given the parity requirement, the added twist was that the inservice needs of staff were to be determined collaboratively by both community and school people through the School-Community Council mechanism.

AN ADVOCATE LEADERSHIP TRAINING INSTITUTE

Other federal education programs have had Leadership Training Institutes (LTI) to provide technical assistance to their sites. USOE however, felt that the structures of other LTIs, typically consisting of a director (usually part-time), an associate director, and a secretary, plus a panel of consultants for field contact, would not serve the technical assistance needs of Urban/Rural sites. Don Davies described the new LTI role: "The needs of this program were for continuous, intensive help from the outside so the process would work." Making the process work has meant direct involvement by the LTI in establishing the School-Community Councils at each site, training them to function as decision-makers, writing by-laws, writing proposals, giving the sites consumer advice, training leaders, and mediating between Council and school boards. The need for LTI support by the Councils has decreased as they have matured, but its advocate role in the beginning was essential for the survival of most of the programs. Since then, the LTI has provided training workshops in evaluation, curriculum, community involvement, and socio-cultural education as well as technical assistance upon request to individual sites. The LTI through workshops, conferences, and newsletters has served as a unifying element for the Urban/Rural sites.

The kind of advocacy role that an entity like the Leadership Training Institute has been called upon to give to the project sites is as that of consumer educator, protector, and advisor. Some of the sites have learned that the purchase of services in the education market is as much in the tradition of "good old American business" as the market for used cars. Virtually the same consumer cautions and wariness have been needed. Recently, an evaluation package was offered a site by a consulting firm for the price of $10,000. The site asked

the LTI to give them an opinion as to its worth. The advice of a member of the LTI staff was that the charges were far in excess of the worth of the service proposed by the consultants. This and other experiences force us to conclude that school systems need some source of consumer education and advice from a source that is not at the same time in market competition for their money.

GREAT FLEXIBILITY WITHIN A BROAD CATEGORY OF NEED

The great flexibility and freedom given the School-Community Councils, particularly in the early years of the program, is certainly unique among federal programs. The first two paragraphs of the foreword to the program information document by Associate Commissioner Don Davies that served as the Urban/Rural guidelines declares SCC's autonomy:

> The Urban/Rural School Development Program, under the Education Professions Development Act (EPDA), has been designed to build on the talents and energies of dedicated, experienced personnel who are now at work in poverty area schools. They have many ideas about the needs of children in their schools, and they will play the major role in developing and implementing changes in schools participating in the Urban/Rural School Development Program.
>
> They will join all the people concerned with the education offered by the school-administrators, paraprofessionals, students, parents, and the community in writing a new script for educational performance within the school. The Office of Education will not dictate to local projects. Local school superintendents will not design them. They will be the creation and responsibility of the entire school-staff and local community. The result will be a school with a new environment which is stimulating and satisfying to the child and teacher alike, and, in which the academic achievement and human development of children will be significantly increased.

Those were strong and optimistic statements that were to undergo much negotiation, but, surprisingly, they have survived with relatively little modification.

So far, we have described the origins of Urban/Rural, related the events and social changes that shaped it, and described the unique features that distinguish it from other federal educational programs. We will now focus on what has been learned from the Urban/Rural experiences about inservice education. More specifically, what has been learned that can help resolve some of the problems that have generally plagued inservice education efforts in the past?

THE RECEPTIVENESS OF TEACHERS

One major problem with inservice education is that teachers' experience with it has been negative for a number of too frequently recurring reasons. The training has been unrelated to their needs. It has been conducted in "one shot" weekend workshops or conferences not sustained enough for teachers to learn, practice, and assimilate the training. It as been conducted on the teacher's

time rather than during the work day and, afterwards, there has been little followup support to assist the teacher in implementing the training.

Most Urban/Rural staff development programs have tried to remove these causes of negative teacher attitudes towards inservice training. Inservice education has been based on needs assessments of both staff and parents. The training has been continual and sustained. In short, Urban/Rural programs have attempted, by including teachers in the planning, to build in safeguards to those negative characteristics of traditional inservice education listed above. The results can be best illustrated by a project-wide survey conducted by the Stanford LTI as part of its total program evaluation work. The survey covered 982 respondents that included various role groups: Team Managers (project directors), Council Chairpersons, Council Members, Teachers, Administrators, Urban/Rural Staff, Parents, School Development Team Members, and Students and Paraprofessionals. The survey asked all the role group members listed (including 314 teachers) to rate the impact of the Urban/Rural Program at their sites (Figure 1).

WHAT IS THE PRESENT IMPACT OF URBAN/RURAL AT THIS SITE IN EACH OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS?

	MORE SINCE U/R	LESS SINCE U/R	NO CHANGE	DON'T KNOW
a. New ideas for teaching.	90.0%	0.2%	3.3%	10.9%
b. New materials for the classroom.	72.9%	0.4%	8.8%	11.5%
c. New knowledge of children.	70.0%	0.6%	8.5%	14.5%
d. New attitudes toward children.	67.9%	0.4%	10.5%	14.7%
e. New ways of identifying (diagnosing) learning/reading problems.	68.4%	0.7%	6.5%	14.9%
f. New types of contact with parents.	57.1%	1.1%	19.5%	15.2%
g. Opportunities to upgrade professional competencies.	70.5%	0.8%	4.0%	17.3%
h. Seek input from staff	60.9%	1.3%	9.9%	20.4%

Figure 1

Items A through E are indicators of program impact on the classroom which infer that favorable attitudes towards the training by all role group, including the 314 teachers, exists. No claims are made at this time about actual measurable

impact on children in performance since this part of the evaluation is not yet complete, but we feel safe in claiming that a high proportion of teachers in the program hold favorable attitudes towards inservice education. Perhaps there will be further corroboration of this as we move deeper into the program evaluation process.

A WORKING DEFINITION OF INSERVICE EDUCATION?

A definition of inservice education is needed. A number of continuing teacher education activities that are difficult to justify in terms of direct service to students have been charged to Urban/Rural resources. We need to examine the assumptions that underlie the acceptance, promotion, and subsidization of many activities that are classified as inservice education. Historically, courses taken by teachers in college and university campuses for which they have contracted as individuals, with the chief incentives being the acquisition of course credits for salary increases, have been accepted as inservice education. Staff are given salary increments on the assumption that what they learn will be of service to their clients. The fact is that such courses rarely result in direct improvement of services to the children. The knowledge and competencies acquired are remote from teachers' needs or those of their students. Such education might be more accurately defined as career development (for those who seek advancement or change in jobs) or professional development, which is education of broad and general professional benefit but not designed to develop specific competencies related to specific service needs.

Considerable hostility and conflict has developed in Urban/Rural sites in which inservice education has taken the form of college courses leading towards advanced degrees and higher pay. The higher pay is not resented. What is resented is the communities' inability to see connection between the needs of school and the remote form of inservice education observed. In some sites, the resentment has been accentuated when the newly credentialed staff go on to better paying positions in other districts with degrees earned at their site's expense.

The Urban/Rural experience compels us to define inservice education as teacher training based on assessments that reveal the present and anticipated needs of teachers and all other staff to serve their school and its community with optimum effectiveness, with the priority of needs and the criteria for effectiveness collaboratively established by school staff and representatives of the community.

It is our observation that community members of an SCC support inservice education programs when they can see a close match between identified needs and the training activities.

THE URBAN/RURAL EXPERIENCE WITH TEACHER RELUCTANCE TO EXPRESS DEFICIENCIES AND ASK FOR TRAINING

Among the many problems voiced about inservice education is that the social situation of the teaching profession makes it very difficult for teachers to comfortably express their deficiencies or to ask for training. This problem has not been visibly manifest among the Urban/Rural sites. Perhaps it has not been observed because the difficulty and discomfort in expresssing deficiencies has been acted out in other forms. What has been noted is a strong tendency for teachers to locate the problems outside themselves. The home or child, the administration, and the lack of resources and facilities receive the blame. On the other hand, parents and children tend to place the problem on teachers or the

school in general. The experience at a rural midwest site represents the situation typical of many other sites. In this case, the teachers blamed their problems and poor student performance on apathetic parents, poor family life, and the welfare syndrome of "deadened motivation." In contrast, the parents described the teachers as unfriendly, condescending, and uncaring and described the school as an alien place. At this site the School-Community Council, the mechanism by which these differences might be resolved and transformed into mutually agreed-upon needs and goals, was unfortunately not sufficiently developed. Sites that have worked out these problems seem to have School-Community Councils that have developed the skills to conduct broad-based needs assessments in which staff, community, students, and administrators all participate. Processes have been used that reveal the causes, conditions, and histories of problems in such ways that staff and parents do not need to feel personal guilt, but rather can work together to examine them objectively for purposes of acting upon them.

STRATEGIES AND MECHANISMS FOR PROVIDING INSERVICE EDUCATION WHICH HAVE EMERGED IN URBAN/RURAL

Four basic strategies or mechanisms have evolved: the resident professor model; the college or university affiliation with on-site training; consultant firm affiliation; and the "shop for services" model.

Of the four, the resident professor model seems to be the most creative and promising idea. It is a variation of field-based teacher education, but the form it has taken in Urban/Rural may be original. Typically, two college or university level teacher trainers are contracted, usually with these conditions:

1. They reside in the school-community.
2. They work full time with the site staff.
3. They observe teachers and do demonstration teaching in the classrooms.
4. Their training is based either on assessed needs of the staff or on needs resulting from the implementation of an educational program.
5. They help identify and select other trainers or technical assistance.
6. They make the resources of their home university or college available to the site.
7. They report regularly to the School-Community Council.

The advantages of this mode of providing inservice education are obvious: the training is continuous, it is related to the needs and goals of the school, and there is time for confidence and rapport to develop between trainers and staff. The disadvantages and cautions are that such professor types are quite difficult to find. They work out best when they take a real interest in the school and the community and when they project a willingness to learn from as well as teach staff and community persons. The ultimate compliment given such a trainer by teachers is "he's great with the kids and he can demonstrate what he teaches." A hard reality intrudes, however, since colleges sometimes unload their "rejects" on unwary sites.

The college or university affiliation model is probably the most commonly used among the sites. It is different from the resident professor model in that usually a college representative coordinates the site and college transactions and deploys college staff as needed or as planned. Training is frequently done on-site and sometimes the content is even tailored to the needs of the site. Councils, usually through their executive officers or team managers, negotiate these conditions. From the Urban/Rural experience with colleges and universities it has been learned that is that much can be gained by tough negotiation. Sites

have won agreements from colleges to tailor courses to the training needs of sites as determined by the sites, even to give degree credit for such courses and to reduce fees when the site provides the facilities for training, the "captive clientele," and the costs of all materials needed. In one or two instances, sites have located their own trainers and insisted that the university employ and assign them to the site.

Lest too rosy a picture be conveyed, the caveats learned from the college or university model are that in too many cases sites have become the captives of the colleges or universities through contractual agreements that gained few tailored responses to meet the needs of the sites.

Four sites have retained consulting firms as their main providers of training. In at least one case, they did so because of the distrust of the local colleges. The consulting firms provide services within their capability. Usually, like the colleges, they attempt to provide every service from proposal writing to evaluation of their own services. They help the site locate consultants for those needs outside their scope of competence. Our observation is that they have been more flexible and accommodating than the colleges or universities, and that they are more willing to respond to specific site needs.

There are several disadvantages inherent in this consulting firm affiliation model. Sometimes the sites are subjected to as much salesmanship as service. It is sometimes hard to tell whether a site is "sold" a need or whether the need is real. Firms naturally tend to sell what they have packaged and what they can do best.

In the final model, some sites have no affiliation or resident professors. They assess their needs, map out their plans, and then "shop for services" as they need them. Naturally, the quality of their choices depends greatly on the competence of the staff and Council members. Training in these cases appears in most cases sporadic and unpatterned.

OTHER URBAN/RURAL EXPERIENCES FOR THE DESIGN OF A NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR INSERVICE EDUCATION?

The name of the project, Urban/Rural, literally means that it includes both urban and rural school systems. It is quite clear at this point that the implementation of inservice education has been most difficult and probably had the least impact in the huge urban complexes. Midsize urban centers have been more successful, but implementation has probably been easiest in rural communities. There are several factors involved. First, unions in large urban centers, such as New York and Newark, rigidly control use of the teacher's time. In one of these cities, the union scale for any after school or weekend participation in workshops is $9.00 per hour. A huge amount of this site's inservice budget has gone to pay stipends to teachers. Understandably, community participants in training or planning expect renumeration also but are deeply resentful of the amount that teacher stipends drain from the program. Second, rural teachers often have had little access to or experience with college beyond the minimum needed for credentialing. This isolation has kept many teaching innovations from reaching them. Also, because of the generally low power of unions in rural areas, teachers can be directed by administrative fiat to undergo training much more readily than in urban sites. Nevertheless, a difference in quality between low and high parity rural site inservice education activities is evident. The focus at the low parity sites is narrow and aimed at notions of the children's deficits, while the high parity sites attend to community as staff perceptions of needs.

Like that of a now-expired BEPD project, the Training Teacher Trainers Program, our experience has been that projects appear most successful when their goals coincide with or reinforce local values, local priorities, and interests that enable activities to take place that are desirable from a local point of view.

Inservice education has been more successful at sites with SCC's that have realized their power, stuck to their guns, insisted on their autonomy, and have not let their goals be deflected by expediency, pressures, or role conflicts between Council and board. Success also appears related to SCC's maintaining "constructive" tensions between themselves and other role groups in the school-community so that philosophical, cultural, and methodological differences could be worked out.

The Urban/Rural program was given a five year cycle of operation. Recently, a sixth year was added as a result of USOE's decision of define the first as a planning year. It took at least two years for funding problems to be resolved, for needs to be assessed and translated into program plans, and for a genuine implementation to be accomplished. Consequently, only in the last two or three years can it be said that the sites have fully implemented training programs. So little has been known about how to assess staff training needs for a specific school, it appears to us that time has been a critical variable in determining the successes in the Urban/Rural program. Succesful sites have had to be very flexible. They have had to be willing to learn through trial and error and have had to keep a very experimental attitude towards their program activities.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Two important changes in the national environment determined the philosophy and focus of the Urban/Rural School Development Program. One, the Civil Rights movement and accompanying turmoil compelled the program designers to give the community parity with the school professionals in the governance of the program. Two, the sudden teacher oversupply made the decision to improve schools through inservice staff development very timely. Present educational needs indicate that the Urban/Rural program has some important experiences to offer national and local educational policy makers who are working to meet these needs. These experiences are as follows:

1. The concept of community participation in decision-making on parity with school professionals and boards of education has proven viable.

2. Parity in decision-making between community and professionals has produced inservice education activities more numerous and diverse than at sites in which such parity was minimally achieved. The numbers and diversity of activities at the high parity sites reflects community as well as staff-felt needs.

3. Program activities resulting from decision processes dominated by either staff or community show tendencies to scapegoating or displacement of guilt. The result is low credibility for program accomplishments and resentment of the implicit imposition of blame for educational failure by the dominant decision-makers on those who are the objects of the decision.

4. Because of the pervasive distrust and alienation between schools and many segments of their communities, both school and community need to be brought together in some process by which they can communicate, mutually educate, interact, collaboratively produce, and be accountable for their children's educational programs.

5. Community and staff collaboration in decision-making requires leadership training, particularly of community persons.

6. Any governing body that buys services needs consumer counsel, but experience in Urban/Rural shows that this is more critical when community and lower echelon staff are involved in such decisions.

7. Flexible program guidelines within a broad category of need have been instrumental in producing diverse and extremely creative program activities in Urban/Rural. Urban/Rural sites represent the incredibly wide range of physical settings, populations, and cultures in which children and teachers interact. It is inconceivable to one who has experienced this variety how any but the broadest, most flexible guidelines could apply.

8. The experience of Urban/Rural is that teachers respond favorably to inservice education. Responses to their needs are offered in forms that do not cause undue imposition on their personal lives and goals. High parity sites demonstrate that retention of teacher commitment over time is a function of diversity of activities, activities that acknowledge that the needs are complex and that call for accountability and support from all segments of the school-community for responses to the children's needs. Narrow focused programs suffer symptoms of eroding teacher commitment and staff conflict over program objectives.

9. A more precise definition of inservice education is needed. Valuable resources are being dissipated in activities that cannot be identified as inservice education with any justification.

10. Parity has proven to be a useful process for dealing with teacher reluctance to express deficiencies and needs for training: (1) by having a strong say in determining their needs and (2) by having a forum in which to both express their perceptions of the problems and hear and be free to confront the perceptions of the community. Teachers have tended to move with the community toward cooperation in the common goal of responding to the educational needs of the children. These two equally empowered groups forced to confront and deal with each other have found cooperation, more frequently than not, a more attractive alternative than conflict. Our observation is that cooperation begins with the expression and acceptance of the needs each feels in order to respond to the expectations of the other.

11. Four basic mechanisms have evolved in the program for delivering inservice education. Each has advantages and disadvantages. The resident professor model appears to be the most promising. The sites' response to the idea probably represents a real staff need for the connection to the broad knowledge in the field that a university professor can provide. The district's typical resource teachers would usually be limited in this respect.

The Urban/Rural program evaluation should be completed in the spring of 1978. A number of the observations included in this paper may be corroborated at that time; some perhaps may be contradicted by data gathered and processed more systematically. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the experienced educator or researcher may find something of use in this paper.